

NWX-DOC CONFERENCING

**Moderator: Laurel Bryant
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2:52 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen-only mode until the question and answer session has begun. At that time if you would like to ask a question please press star then 1 on your touchtone phone.

Today's conference is being recorded, if you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. And now I would like to turn the meeting over to Ms. Laurel Bryant, thank you and you may begin.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks a lot (Camelia), welcome everyone this is the first in a series of four public comment meetings with the presidential task force on combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and seafood fraud.

My name is Laurel Bryant I'm Chief of External Affairs here at NOAA Fisheries with the Office of Communications. And in the room with me I have Sally Yozell, Senior Advisor Office of the Undersecretary for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment with the Department of State.

And I have Russell Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries. We also have a number of other federal agencies represented on the line that will be listening to your comments today.

Food and Drug Administration, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense and we're anticipating a few others to be joining as the call goes on.

Before I turn the phone call over for the Operator to give you instructions I want to give you a little format on how this phone call is going to be managed, give you some expectations. It is being recorded and transcribed and will be a part of the official public comment record.

And before I turn it over to Sally what we're going to be doing is after the Operator gives you instruction on how to get into the queue and make comments while Sally and Russell are making some of their opening remarks and going through a brief presentation those of you who intent to make comment I would encourage you to get into the queue that will be helpful to me.

So that I can see how many folks intend to comment and we can divide the time appropriately. I would ask that when you make your remarks to be cognizant that there may be other people that are wanting to also make remarks we want to maximize everyone's time.

So if I need to cut you off please tighten it up and end it quickly and you can always get back in the queue to continue if you have other remarks. And with that I will just remind everybody that there is a very brief, very few numbered slide power point presentation online if you don't have that up.

And the information on how to do that is online and with that (Camelia) I'd like to turn it over to you to give folks instructions on how they can get into the queue to make comments.

Coordinator: Thank you and if you would like to make a public comment today you may press star then 1 on your touchtone phone. Please un-mute your phone and record your first and last name clearly and your company, organization.

And please when you're prompted as well as if you would like to ask a question please press star then 1 and record your name and your company when you're prompted, now I'll turn it back over to you.

Laurel Bryant: Okay thanks (Camelia) and I will just say one thing this really is a listening session we are here to listen to you. This isn't really a question and answer session and with that I'd like to turn it over to Sally Yozell, Sally.

Sally Yozell: Great thank you Laurel, thanks to everyone on the phone I'm very impressed we have quite a long list of folks so that's really impressive. I am here on behalf of Catherine Novelli the Undersecretary at the State Department for Economic Growth and Environment and Energy Environment.

And she co-chairs this IUU seafood fraud task force with Undersecretary Kathy Sullivan and they've had a great working relationship and we're looking forward to pulling this all together and moving forward.

And this meeting is so important to us because it's really providing us with an opportunity to learn from you everyone on the phone so that you can really help educate us about the issues and ideas you have moving forward related to IUU fishing and seafood fraud.

I mean as most of you know we have one of the best domestic management systems in the world and even with the successes that NOAA has and you all have succeeded at IUU fishing still continues to undermine a lot of our economic and environmental (unintelligible) fisheries both here and abroad.

And, you know, we have all read a number of studies highlighting that IUU fishing in some parts of the world can be as much as a one-third of total fishing activity, which has huge economic disadvantage to our own folks.

And even there while we know it's difficult to understand the full extent of seafood fraud we've seen studies that say one-third of seafood product sampled in certain areas could be mislabeled.

So that is why President Obama in June put forward this Memorandum, this Presidential Memorandum creating a comprehensive framework to combat IUU fishing and seafood fraud.

And the task force believe it or not we're going to be reporting back within 180 days so that is like super, super fast that is a really quick timeframe we're working in and so I apologize for an August day to have this meeting but I'm really impressed you all are on with us.

And we're just going to be taking as much information, learning as much from you all as possible. And on that note let me hand it over to Russell who is going to have a few opening comments and talk about some of the questions and ideas that we're really hoping to get from you all today.

Russell Smith: Thank you Sally and thank you to those on the phone who have joined us on behalf of Dr. Sullivan I'd like to join Sally in emphasizing how important this process is to both of our agencies and to the U.S. Government in general.

Both because of the need to ensure that globally fish supplies are managed sustainably so that they are available for generations to come but also because of the economic impacts because of the fact that we do have a fishery and a fishing fleet that has been managed to avoid IUU fishing and for that fleet to have to compete against those that are engaged in IUU fishing is obviously unfair.

We are also obviously concerned about consumers and making sure that with respect to information about source of fishing - of fish and what the actual fish is that consumers are given accurate information.

I think many of you have probably seen the guiding questions that we have circulated that we have made available to help focus our discussion here as well as the comments that come into us through the federal register process and I'll talk about that a little later.

These questions focus on the two issues that we've described. IUU fishing what is IUU fishing, what's the extent of IUU fishing, what are some of the authorities tools that are available both domestically and internationally for addressing IUU fishing.

How can we improve on our use of those tools, again both from the domestic perspective as well as the international perspective, how might we expand those tools to better enable our - us to combat IUU fishing, how can we better work with industry, NGO's, other governments to further this objective.

There are also some questions that focus on the issue of seafood fraud and they - so I'm going to track those from those questions on IUU fishing. How can we - what is the extent of the problem with seafood fraud, how can - what authorities are there and how can we improve those authorities and our use of

those authorities and how can we better cooperate to combat issues of seafood fraud.

Again we really appreciate your participation today and the information that you will provide us with here and through the federal register process. We really are here as Sally said to listen, to learn, to get input into the process that we can then use to formulate recommendations based upon that input.

With that let me turn it back over to Laurel. Sally is going to walk us through just a couple of other things.

Sally Yozell: Okay great thank you Russell and thank you for framing that so that everybody is really set to speak today. Let me just walk quickly through the slides that we sent out.

You've had the background one up so we can move on from that I think you've, you know, this is the task force co-chair by NOAA and the State Department, with several representatives that you can see listed below.

And the reason there are so many agencies is this is a multi-pronged issue and we're trying to really knit together all of these issues in a seamless way and hoping that your experience working with all of us can help with that.

Next, and as Russell said we have a very, you know, expanded public engagement process. We have these meetings, this is the first today this Webinar. We've having one in August 20 in Seattle and then a second Webinar here August 27 and then 28 an in person meeting in Washington.

Again so that we can learn as much as possible from all of you. And then if you are looking for information there is this great Web page that NOAA

Fisheries put up and it has all the information about all public engagement, the federal register notice and other information on ways that you can get engaged.

And then the guiding questions Russell just went through those and, you know, some of the questions I'll be honest that we sent to the embassies have a slight different flavor so it relates to international issues but in essence they're all about what's the magnitude of the problem, what are the focus areas.

We want to learn from you the benefits and whatnot. So with that I'm just going to turn it over to Laurel who can start to engage with all of you so we can learn and get really great input.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks Sally, okay before we have (Camelia) open up the lines for the first question I'm going to let you know we've got five people in the queue so the timing is looking good.

I would ask you to please keep your comments to three to four minutes. I anticipate maybe others will come on and as they do we will adjust accordingly. (Camelia) do you want to open up for our first commenter?

Coordinator: Yes the first comment comes from (Jennifer King), Michigan State University, your line is now open.

Laurel Bryant: (Jennifer) do we have you? I wonder if you are on mute. Okay (Camelia) why don't we go to the next person, hello.

Coordinator: The next question comes from (John Simioni) with Independent Consultant, your line is now open.

(John Simioni): Hello can - am I heard?

Laurel Bryant: Yes (John) we can hear you thanks.

(John Simioni): Great thank you I'll try to keep my comments brief. My name is (John Simioni) and I am an independent consultant in Anchorage, Alaska and my work focuses on natural resource trade analysis primarily in the forest and seafood sectors.

I offer my statement today as an analyst of a legal unreported and unregulated IUU fishing for crab in Russian waters. The bottom line is that determining the specific origin and supply chain of U.S. crab imports from Russia is nearly impossible and the legal product can be easily mixed into the shipments along the supply chain.

The risks associated with U.S. imports of IUU Russian crab are many for instance U.S. Lacey Act carries severe penalties for U.S. importers of IUU crab. Another risk is that the added supply of illegal Russian crab in the U.S. market reduces the price of crab and that hurts the Alaska crab industry.

Yet another risk is that U.S. consumers of crab may be contributing unwittingly to illegal fishing of Russian crab. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 there has been an explosion of IUU crab fishing within Russia's exclusive economic zone.

At some point along the trade route IUU crab laundered to appear as if it is of legal origin. Mis-declaring quantities, mislabeling products, creating false documentation and bribing individuals are known techniques for laundering illegal crab.

I'd like to suggest three important points about the supply chain of Russian crab in U.S. imports. One, official trade for Russian crab indicates that the crab export destination country does not match the import country of origin.

Two, the known supply chain of Russian crab to the U.S. involves vessels stopping off at intermediate Asian ports. The same Asian ports that are known globally for Russian IUU crab laundering and trade.

And three, official trade data for Russian crab has large discrepancies with respects to the quantity of crab traded. To expand briefly on the first point about unmatched country of origin in 2012 United States Department of Commerce officially registered about 20% of its total crab imports as Russian origin.

Meanwhile official Russian customs registered no exports of any crab to the United States. This is likely due to vessels stopping off at intermediate ports. The exporting country, intermediate country and importing country appear to account for trade differently.

With respect to the second point it appears that much of the crab that the U.S. imports from Russia lists Asian cities as intermediate ports in U.S. customs declarations. Many of these ports are notorious for their contribution to the laundering, storage and shipment of illegal Russian crab into the global supply chain.

An example of this is that in November 2012 South Korean authorities found warehouses within their country with at least 13 million pounds of crab, which up until that time were totally undocumented. Legal and illegal crab have great potential to mix in South Korea and Japan.

And with respect to the third point on discrepancies and quantities of customs data what can be discerned from official customs data by South Korean, Japan, China and United States indicates that in 2012 these four countries, which account nearly - for nearly all Russian exports of crab imported twice as much live, frozen and processed crab from Russia as Russian official harvest levels.

This is an indication of the extent of illegal fishing in Russia and that the illegal crab is getting into the international market. Taken all together at present it is highly likely that the United States continues to import illegally harvested Russian crab.

But the merchant supply chain and imprecise product tracking it purveyed our global trade system meaning that it is difficult to determine the true scope of the problem an extremely difficult to have confidence that illegal products aren't entering into our supply chains, thank you.

Laurel Bryant: (John) thank you very much. Operator let's go to the next person.

Coordinator: The next person is (Jack Brooks) from J.M. Clayton your line is now open.

(Jack Brooks): Yes good afternoon my name is (Jack Brooks) I'm with the J.M. Clayton Company in Cambridge Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay. First of all I'd like to thank you all for putting this together and the administration.

We have - are experiencing some problems with fraud in our blue crab industry in the - up and down the East Coast and Gulf Coast and we look - we appreciate the opportunity to share our concerns with you.

First of all the imports of blue crab or blue light - light blue crab are coming into the country properly labeled. The problems arise when peers of mine who are licensed or maybe not licensed who package, pick, process crab are taking the cheaper crab meat from Asia, South America, Central America.

And simply opening it up, putting it in a domestic container and then suddenly it's a product of the USA being marketed as that dragging our economy down, putting us at great risk for seafood safety and these poor consumers at point of purchase are - who think they're buying domestic meat from Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina whatever state it may be are getting defrauded.

So this is becoming more and more widespread the opportunity is there and it's very, very profitable and we have been trying to get FDA and USDA and whoever would regulate this and enforce these labeling laws involved so we can hopefully get some relief here because those of us who are legitimately labeling and marketing and trying to do it right are suffering and being put at an enormous hardship.

We're losing customers and the folks who decide to cheat are financially benefiting and at our expense and at the expense of the fisherman, at the expense of the people who work in our factories and our economies and our communities.

Laurel Bryant: Thank you (Jack) very much.

(Jack Brooks): Thank you.

Laurel Bryant: Before I go onto the next person (Camelia) I just - we only have two additional people in the queue so if others are thinking about making

comments you might want to get in the queue. (Camelia) let's go to our next commenter.

Coordinator: The next comment comes from (David Shore) with the World Wildlife Fund, your line is now open.

(David Shore): Greetings thank you can you hear me okay?

Laurel Bryant: Yes we can (David).

(David Shore): Thank you very much and thank you I also want to repeat my thanks for you guys putting this together. So WWF strongly welcomes the initiative launched by President Obama on June 17.

And we consider the work of this task force an opportunity for the U.S. to make a fundamental and really important contribution to the sustainability of fisheries globally, the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people but also to help ensure the long-term profitability of the fishing industry and to benefit the U.S. economy and seafood sector.

As Sally and Russell both have mentioned that legal fishing is a major problem the numbers I think that you guys will hear repeatedly throughout this process 13 to 31% of the fish landed, (wild) caught fish landed every year may come from illegal fishing.

That's about 20% an average of about 20% worth up to \$23.5 billion annually. These practices, illegal fishing drive some of the most unsustainable kinds of fishing on the planet often coming from some of the fisheries where the regulations for fishing activity are the weakest.

It's also associated with significant human costs it's heavily associated with slavery and human trafficking as some recent news articles featuring the Eastern Pacific - the Western Pacific had revealed.

It's associated with drug trafficking there are good studies that show high percentages of cocaine smuggling into Europe being done on fishing vessels. It's associated with insecure coast lines and terrorism as was tragically illustrated by the Mumbai bombers coming in on fishing vessels.

All of this because the hundreds of thousands of fishing vessels that exist around the world are among the least monitored of the vessels on the sea. IUU has been an international priority for years and the U.S. has been a global leader in the fight against it.

We've led first of all by example by ensuring that our own fisheries are subject to the rule of law, to best practices for catch documentation and to an enforcement regime that is serious.

Moreover the U.S. has helped, has been a key leader in helping put in place important international instruments and practices including helping regional fisheries management organizations take better care of high seas.

And by helping spearhead something called the port state measures agreement, which is basically a new international treaty that sets standards for all countries to help ensure that they do their part to keep illegal fish from being landed in foreign ports.

But despite all the work over decades the problem still exists and the reason the fundamental reason the problem still exists is that illegal fishing is profitable, it remains profitable and it is profitable because it is so easy to

bring illegal products into market as the previous speaker was illustrating for Alaskan crab.

So it is true that we need to put more cops out on the water but as long as IUU fishing remains profitable cops won't do it. As long as U.S. consumer dollars keeping reaching illegal fishing activities illegal fishing will continue.

This is why we were so glad to hear President Obama refer to the problem of black market fish and to commit his Administration in making sure that all fish sold in the United States is fully traceable to legal fishing activities.

We know now also that the problem is a real one for American businesses and consumers. A recent study published in a peer reviewed journal called Marine Policy reported that up to \$2.1 billion annually of U.S. fish imports originate with illegal catches.

That's an equivalent of a third of the volume of our (wild) caught imports may be from illegal fishing sources. These imports compete unfairly with the legitimate products of the U.S. industry and they threaten legitimate businesses who today have good reason to worry about the source of their supplies.

But the problem of illegal fish exist in the U.S. not because U.S. businesses or consumers don't care or because they are doing bad things purposely it exists because no single business or consumer acting alone can do what it takes to prevent this stuff from getting into our market.

That is why we think it is the time for the government to take some leadership in closing the U.S. market to illegal fish. The U.S. is the largest single nation market for fish products in the world.

And according to NOAA's statistics about 90% of the seafood we consume is imported. We think it's time for the U.S. to take a strong lead on this, the EU has already taken some key first steps but U.S. leadership is needed now to show the way towards solutions that are really effective.

The - we have the technology to solve - I'm sorry.

Laurel Bryant: (David), it's Laurel I just wanted to kind of give you a time you're almost at five minutes so maybe wrap it up in like 30 seconds.

(David Shore): Okay, you got it.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks.

(David Shore): We have the ability to do this and we think it can be done through existing technologies and on the basis of existing legal authorities. We call for the task force to set out clear standards for traceability and proof of legality to do this in a way that is comprehensive, that is risk based, that builds on existing laws and provides good strong incentives and recognition for industry based voluntary practices.

We think that this is plausible and we look forward to a conversation with all stakeholders and with the government over the months ahead on how a solution can be crafted, thank you.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks (David) and again for those that want to continue on you can certainly get back in the queue, appreciate it. (Camelia) our next commenter please.

Coordinator: Our next comment comes from (Glen Delaney), your line is now open.

(Glen Delaney): Hi can you hear me?

Laurel Bryant: We sure can (Glen) thanks.

(Glen Delaney): Hi Laurel and Russell and Sally it's been a long time and others on the line thank you for this opportunity. For the record I am a consultant to the seafood industry here in Washington, DC including as you know fisheries have a great deal of interest and a great deal at stake in the context of IUU fishing and seafood fraud.

As you also know I raised some questions some initial questions regarding the scope of the task force activities or efforts that if clarified I think will help determine which U.S. fisheries have an interest, what those interests will be and therefore what our comments need to be.

I have as you know submitted those electronically as part of the federal register process so I'll spare everyone and I won't read what those comments are you have them available to you as does the public but I will just outline briefly for the sake of this opportunity, which I appreciate.

And one of course is the scope of IUU itself what definition are we using in this exercise because it does have very much a bearing on the nature of activities that may be of interest to some domestic fisheries, activities in foreign fisheries that may be of interest to domestic fisheries in trying to combat those activities or at least prevent products that are produced in that manner from entering into the marketplace.

So that's first and foremost as you well know, you know, there are different definitions of IUU in use in practice. We've got one pursuant to the High Seas Driftnet Mortatorium and Protection Act set forth in the 50CFR 300.201 and

also it sort of perhaps at the other extreme of the range is if you look at the - how IUU is described by the FAO in their IPOA IUU process.

So I call everybody's attention to that and just suggest that, you know, that needs to be clarified somehow and it would be of great help to those of us trying to zero in on specific activities.

The second area generally I raised is what in (excess) is if any with - well what in (excess) of IUU particularly the illegal and I guess unregulated elements are there if any with by catch in foreign fisheries.

And, you know, this is an area that I hope others with great expertise in that area will address in their comments to you. But I just raised that, you know, even within the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium and Protection Act, you know, Congress through other statutes have suggested that there may be an (excess) you want to consider between IUU and addressing by catch conversation or the lack of.

And encouraging other nations to raise their standards of by catch conservation to those of the United States. So again that's something that you might consider as a scope issue of this exercise.

And then a third area that I raised was with regard to the terms - the term seafood fraud and just wanted to clarify that indeed seafood will include cultured or farm raised products such as those raised in other countries and imported to the United States.

As you know for example one of the fisheries I work with closely is the domestic shrimp wild shrimp producing industry and they certainly have a great interest in what goes on with regard to imports of farm raised shrimp.

Where there are a remarkable range of circumvention, evasion seafood fraud activities, fraudulent activities. And for example...

Laurel Bryant: Hey (Glen).

(Glen Delaney): Yes I'm wrapping up.

Laurel Bryant: Okay and also Russell would like to make a comment.

(Glen Delaney): Well...

Russell Smith: Finish.

(Glen Delaney): ...two more sentences and then I'll stop if you - or you can interrupt now that's fine.

Russell Smith: I'm eager to hear what you have to say (Glen).

(Glen Delaney): All right no it's just then with regard to fraud, you know, does that include the activities since FDA is part of this I'm hoping that it would that scope of the task force would apply also with respect to seafood safety issues that the FDA is responsible for enforcing with regard to imports.

Such as and I just raise as an example illegal antibiotics in farm raised seafood products such as shrimp. And then lastly there's another area that the Homeland Security customs would be interested in and those are illegal activities, fraudulent activities designed to circumvent a number of U.S. trade laws.

You know, I just cited the example of any dumping laws but also circumvention of FDA import alerts. Again there is a vast range of seafood fraudulent activities in the import world that I hope will be part of the scope of this exercise.

But it would be nice if that could be somehow clarified to understand that it is for you a listen only session but I encourage you if there is some way to clarify some of those points it would be great.

Russell Smith: So (Glen) thank you very much and I think that what you've just done is very helpful because I think we really are here to listen and try and understand what should be the scope of this activity, what are the problems out there.

We want to hear from you and from others where there are issues that you think that this task force should be focusing on. So I think we have really tried to open the doors as widely as possible and not really circumscribe the types of comments, the types of input that we get.

The one thing I can say is that in opening the doors widely we intended to include aquaculture as well as (wild) caught fish, (wild) caught seafood in the scope of this exercise. If that wasn't clear I apologize.

But beyond that I think you've raised some great questions and those are the types of things that we want to get input on.

(Glen Delaney): Okay well then we'll tell you what we think you should do in terms of scope.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks (Glen), (Camelia) let's go to the next commenter please.

(Glen Delaney): Thank you Russell.

Coordinator: The next comment comes from (Doug Moyer) with Michigan State University, your line is now open.

(Doug Moyer): Hi can you hear me now?

Russell Smith: We can hear you now.

(Doug Moyer): Great thank you. My name is (Doug Moyer) and I'm an instructor at Michigan State University specifically in college of human medicine and the programs in public health.

There I teach classes on counterfeit pharmaceuticals and the public health risks that are associated with those. I am also a researcher in the food front initiative of Michigan State University and Dr. (John Spank) is the director.

He sends his regrets that he could not attend today but our public comments or at least our preliminary comments have already been submitted and they are there for the public to observe.

They mostly focus on definitions of food fraud and the varieties such as even theft and diversion let alone mislabeling and mis-branding and the finer distinctions between EMA economically motivated alteration.

But more importantly we look forward to participating in this as best as possible so I have a very simple question. How does the task force going forward see it's interaction with academicians like ourselves let alone with industry? Thank you.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks very much and before we go to the next speaker I just want to remind folks we don't have that many folks in the queue. So if you would like to make

a comment please feel free to press that star 1 and (Camelia) let's go to our next commenter.

Coordinator: Our next comment comes from (Jack Brooks) of GM - I'm sorry J.M. Clayton, your line is now open.

(Jack Brooks): Hi yes I was on just a few minutes ago and wanted to be brief because of the time limits but it sounds like you all have a little bit more time I do have a few more details about the seafood fraud I mentioned earlier.

The I believe that the FDA and or USDA had - do regulate this type of seafood fraud I mentioned about imported blue crab or blue crab light blue crab crabmeat coming in and getting repacked in a domestic container.

We do have - this is as I mentioned creating a severe economic hardships on the fisherman and on the processing industry and all the food - all the supply chains that follow that.

We do have U.S. firms that are going out of business because of this. Myself and a couple other folks have taken on the task of trying to get some DNA testing done but our resources are very, very limited.

There are some ways to test some of it not all of it because some of it is of the same species as we have on our Eastern Gulf Coast that they do have down in Central and South America.

And but the labeling issue we have FDA has always been the regulator for this until the (Kohl) Act was adopted. When the (Kohl) Act came in there was a big step backwards in that FDA always considered substantial transformation where at which point this crab meat could lose it's country of origin labeling.

FDA considered that to be making a crab cake and a (unintelligible) double crab. USDA from what I understand didn't do that they said if you simply move it from one container to another and have a short pasteurization that would be considered substantial transformation.

So we do have some conflicting issues here and we certainly do look forward to FDA and USDA weighing in on this because this is a huge problem for our very small and rural industry here from Texas up here to Maryland and Delaware, New Jersey.

But I do have a lot of other details but I know that time is short so I don't want to take any more of your time. I look forward to hearing more from you, thank you very much.

Laurel Bryant: Thanks (Jack) and yes everybody has that online comment option so please be sure to put in all of the details and comments that you're summarizing more today and (Camelia) why don't we go to the next speaker.

Coordinator: The next speaker is (Vladimir) from NPAFC, your line is now open.

(Vladimir): Okay thank you for giving me this chance to speak before the audience. Is it okay?

Laurel Bryant: Yes (Vladimir) we can hear you just fine thank you.

(Vladimir): Okay thank you in my short piece I would like to mention the importance of Pacific Salmon. This group is one of the most important groups of fish in the Gulf fishery and they are fortunate the Gulf (unintelligible) fishery harvest is gradually increasing and recently almost reached 1% by weight in the year 2011.

And more Pacific Salmon important please not limited by the (bar group) for a monetary value of the catch. NPAFC promotes conservation and sustainability (unintelligible) through the fisheries enforcement and scientific research.

Each year more than 4 million of square kilometers of the North Pacific monitored by NPAFC member (unintelligible) using more than one hundred (days) of ship time and about five hundred hours of area patrol including the radar (unintelligible) surveillance.

NPAFC projects collaborate through the joint sea patrols including certain (personnel) exchange and the regular conference calls also. In this 20 years NPAFC related cooperative (unintelligible) in the convention area detected 47 vessels conducting direct illegal (unintelligible) operation for salmon and apprehended 20 vessels.

The number of (IEU) vessels detected each year has recently increased from 6 to 11 in the late 1990s to zero to one because of expanded (unintelligible).

And simultaneous gradual growth in terms of commercial Pacific salmon harvest in NPAFC member countries demonstrate this expense of international corporation among the members.

However they continue to address illegal high (unintelligible) requires informational community to remain (vigilant) to improve monitoring (unintelligible) in the North Pacific Ocean.

(Unintelligible) interception of this expected IUU fishing vessel (unintelligible) by the U.S. Coast Guard got their (unintelligible) in May of

this year demonstrated that illegal fishing Pacific Salmon in their shore waters is still not (unintelligible).

(Unintelligible) adopted the international plan of action to prevent, detour and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the year 2001.

Several objectives of this plan have been implemented worldwide while other need more thorough attention likely adjustment to the current conditions.

The NPAFC encourages the member countries to become part of the four (state) (unintelligible) agreement to prevent, detour, eliminate IUU fishing. And during the commissions annual meeting so a progress report of the current status and plans regarding (DSMA).

You know that the United States (unintelligible) the (DSMA) in April of this year. In Canada it is anticipated that (certification) of the (signed) (DSMA) will conclude in the late year of 2015.

The Russian Federation has also signed the agreement that has been submitted for the Russian (parliament) consideration. Japan, Korea acknowledged their effectiveness of (DSMA) and are currently under (unintelligible) procedures to join.

And the (DSMA) will enter into the course (unintelligible) after date of the Director General over (pay off) of the (unintelligible) certification. And as of May of this year (23) countries have signed the agreement and 11 countries can (rectified) it.

Besides international agreement (unintelligible) general public awareness and worldwide spread understanding and acknowledgement of the issues

(unintelligible) to ensure IUU fishing of the most critical endangered wild (fishes).

NPAFC is exploring approaches to implement and ambitious ideas that international (unintelligible). The international (unintelligible) implementation we will contribute to the environment through it's social component outreach activities and public participation (unintelligible).

People will have opportunities to address questions, obtain and share information and obtain expert views and opinion in matters related to Pacific Salmon.

Laurel Bryant: Hey (Vladimir) you've got about 30 seconds left please if you could start to wrap it up.

(Vladimir): Okay thank you, my proposal is that similar initiatives may be organized in relation to endangered (tuna) species or some endangered species in the Gulf Ocean.

NPAFC is open for collaboration with (over eleven) organizations (unintelligible) thank you for your attention.

Laurel Bryant: Thank you (Vladimir) and I would remind you to please definitely put your comments into writing to the online resource that we have, that would be terrific.

Operator I do not see anyone else in the queue so I would like to just give like another 30 seconds for anybody that may want to make remarks to the task force here.

And if not then this call will end much more expeditiously than anticipated.
Anyone want to get into the queue? Lots of you out there listening so we know we've got lots of engagement, which is very reassuring.

And with that I think since I don't see anybody I'm going to turn it over to Russell for some kind of closing remarks and reminders on the next meetings.

Russell Smith: So again thank you very much for your participation. I think that we've gotten some good information here and we look forward to getting more. I'm hoping that this exchange and folks having the opportunity to hear some of the thoughts, some of the ideas, come of the questions that are coming from others will spark some further thoughts and further comments from further participation.

We have as you may know we have a Web site that's been set up on the - on NOAA's Web page. If you go to NOAA's to the national marine fishery service home page and then select international you will see a page that has been set up for the task force, which has additional information like the federal register notice, information on how to submit comments.

And those comments are due by September 2 and they can be submitted in writing through...

Laurel Bryant: Online.

Russell Smith: ...online electronically. It also have information on the upcoming listening sessions. There will be another Webinar on the 27th of August same time and you can find details on how to participate on the Web site.

In addition we will have two in person listening sessions one in Seattle next week on August 20 from 3:00 to 5:00 at the Mayflower Park Hotel and then a second in person listening session here in Washington, DC at the Washington Court Hotel at Capitol Hill on the 28th of August from 1:00 to 3:00 pm.

I'd like to say again thank you very much for participating. We look forward to both having you participate in the upcoming three listening sessions as well as Laurel suggested providing your comments in writing through the federal register process.

And we look forward to continuing to engage with you on these important issues.

Laurel Bryant: Great Russell, thanks Russell, thank you Sally and maybe we'll see you all in Seattle, appreciate your time, thank you bye-bye.

Coordinator: This concludes today's conference you may disconnect at this time.

END